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Cuba

Risquet Receives Visiting Zambian Delegation

FL011846 Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 1803 GMT 01 Sep 87

[Text] Alexander Grey Zulu, secretary general of the Zambian United National Independence Party [UNIP], arrived in Havana today at the head of a large Zambian delegation.

Jorge Risquet Valdes, member of the politburo of the Communist Party of Cuba, received the Zambian delegation at Jose Marti International Airport. Zulu, who is visiting Cuba for the first time, will meet with high-ranking party and government leaders during his stay.

The UNIP secretary general is a high-ranking political leader who is noted for his active participation in the struggle for his country's independence and his support for national liberation movements in Africa.

Zulu is accompanied by ministers and ranking officials of the Zambian Government and the UNIP, on a visit of several days to Cuba which will include a tour of important centers of scientific, cultural and historical interest.

Poor Planning Cited in Ciego Camping Losses

FL011612 Havana Tele-Rebelde Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 1 Sep 87

[Text] The fact that Ciego de Avila has become the first province in the country to fulfill the camping plan for the July-August vacation period has enabled it to effect a favorable economic recovery (?following) the losses incurred during the first 6 months of this year. The province welcomed more than 20,400 campers in its six permanent camps and one substation. This made it possible to exceed the registration plan by 21 percent and to recoup 103,000 pesos of the first half's losses.

[Begin recording] [Unidentified speaker] These losses occurred basically because of shortcomings in our management even though the marketed products did not have an efficient behavior. We should have sought other options as we did this year. [end recording]

Despite these achievements during the season peak, Ciego de Avila will be unable to fulfill the year's plan, which anticipated 61,000 campers, since it has yet to reach the 60 percent mark. This is the outcome of poor planning, both by the national enterprise and by the provincial leadership. Therefore, thought has been given to more realistic figures for next year, with 5,000 less campers and a more efficient commercial management in the interest of favorable economic results aimed at profitability without affecting the quality of services. This is imperative and the best way to recover the losses registered from 1982 to date, which amount to nearly 1 million pesos

FAR Civilian Union Organized in Havana Province

FL011623 Havana Tele-Rebelde Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 1 Sep 87

[Text] The conference to set up the FAR civilian workers trade union in Havana Province has been held in a critical and self-critical spirit at the multipurpose hall of the Western Army's officers club. The conferees debated the problems in the province and elected the provincial committee made up of 37 outstanding comrades who will be led by Manuel Blanco Lozano and Giraldo Rodriguez as secretary general and second secretary, respectively.

Rene Penalver Valdes, member of the Communist Party of Cuba Central Committee and second secretary of the CTC [Central Organization of Cuban Trade Unions], made the closing remarks, urging the FAR civilian workers to continue to be models of combativity and dedication within the labor movement. He also congratulated them all for the way they had conducted the conference.

Gorbachev To Visit Before End Of Year
PA021648 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1541 GMT 2 Sep 87

[Text] Mexico City, 2 Sep (EFE) — Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev will visit Mexico, possibly before the end of the year, following a meeting with U.S. President Ronald Reagan.

The Mexican Foreign Ministry confirmed to the press Gorbachev's visit. Gorbachev's trip will also include Argentina, Uruguay, and perhaps Peru and Brazil.

The dates of Gorbachev's Latin American tour will be set after a meeting to be held this month between Soviet Foreign Affairs Minister Eduard Shevardnadze and U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz.

The Reagan-Gorbachev "summit" might be held at the end of the year in Washington, which would be the starting point of his tour of Latin America.

Gorbachev's visit will set a precedent, because only Leonid Brezhnev — in the 1960's — visited Cuba, the only Communist Latin American country. [sentence as received]

Cardenas Says PRI Changes Invite Unrest
PA011550 Mexico City EXCELSIOR in Spanish 24 Aug 87 pp 1-a, 20-a 42-a

[Article by J. Hernandez Lopez]

[Text] Jiquilpan, Michoacan, 28 Aug — Cuauhtemoc Cardenas said today that by refusing to make structural changes, the PRI is inviting abstention in the next elections and that the rulers will have less democratic legitimacy and will thus invite a social explosion in the country.

At the foot of his father's statue, Cardenas admitted the possibility that the democratic faction in the near future will lead a large march to Zocalo Square in Mexico City. In his efforts to downplay as antidemocratic the appearance of the six PRI precandidates, he wrote them off as a credit to his faction's success.

Despite the predictions of conflict, the ceremony held in President Lazaro Cardenas' homeland was peaceful; it was attended mostly by peasants who carried blankets with the PRI coat of arms. There were town orchestras, fireworks, and radiant sunshine.

On the podium, Cardenas said that he did not wish to intervene in the government of his successor, Luis Martinez Villicana. However, at a later news conference, he criticized the "illegal" actions that the former agrarian reform secretary had committed against Cardenas' followers. He was accompanied by former Michoacan Governor Ifigenia Martinez, among others. He said that "the time has come for every Mexican, each of us, to define our stand. The seriousness of the situation no longer allows doubts, hesitation, or ambiguity.

He explained the "two opposing concepts" placed before the Mexican people: One is popular, democratic, and opposed to the IMF; the other is contrary to the social demands the great economic centers pay attention to, and has little future in Mexico.

He recalled that 1 year before initiating its activities, the democratic faction had obtained a response that "encourages and demands commitment," despite "harassment and persecution."

Cardenas added that when the democratic movement began, "opportunistic voices tried to disqualify us, but no one ever offered alternate proposals or challenged the contents of ours."

Dressed in a white sports shirt, gray pants, and brown shoes, Cardenas Solorzano discussed the appearances of the six presidential hopefuls. He said that these appearances were to "confuse and distract the attention of the nation with a maneuver staged behind the backs of the party members and will be detrimental to whichever candidate is nominated."

Cardenas added that naming six precandidates does not mean "in any way that the party's members have regained the power to determine who the presidential candidate will be."

To applause and shouts he said: "Six public servants make an appearance before a small group of leaders, who hear them out, knowing that their speeches will contain no elements likely to influence the ultimate decision, which is not even made by this small group of leaders."

Describing the selection process of the six precandidates as antidemocratic, Cardenas said that "these changes in form and not in substance, the political necessity to make it appear as a democratic change, the supposed limitation to choose only among six, and their showing to the public, was all due to the activities of the democratic faction, whether this is recognized or not."

Before a crowd estimated by the event's organizers at 15,000 persons and by police at 5,000, Cardenas reaffirmed the demand that a meeting be held to register precandidates, that sufficient time be given to rally supporters, and that votes be cast for delegates to select a presidential candidate.

He said that "in a democratic confrontation, there is no doubt that the majorities that share our ideas would be victorious."

He asserted in his speech: "Resisting the changes being demanded — to which the party could make a contribution by renewing its commitments to the people and to the nation — is to invite a social explosion that can still be prevented."

Grave responsibility to the party and the country rests with those who ignore the feelings of the masses and who give themselves to the service and defense of the privileges of minorities, he said.

He called for a continuation on a national scale of the struggle to free up the elections, the unions, the common land [ejidos] and for the urban colonizers to reestablish democracy in Mexico. Cardenas' speech was followed by speakers who ranged from boring to rabble-rousing. One speaker proposed that all the faction's supporters march to Zocalo Square in Mexico City, starting from their respective units.

Later, at party headquarters, Cardenas added that the proposal to march to Zocalo Square will be studied.

PMS Announces Members of Parliamentary Group
FL021938 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish
2050 GMT 31 Aug 87

[Text] Mexico City, 31 Aug (NOTIMEX) — As part of the process of unification of the left, the Mexican Socialist party, PMS, announced the names of the 20 deputies in the parliamentary group, that will participate in the 53d Legislature. The merger of six leftist organizations that will be represented in the lower chamber was announced in a news conference.

Arnaldo Martinez Verdugo, who was named coordinator of the PMS parliamentary group, said that the purpose of this is to overcome difficulties and take real steps forward in uniting the Mexican left.

The PMS parliamentary group will strive to defend the interests of the working class and of all the working people, by acting as an independent opposition force and providing a different option in the lower chamber, Verdugo said.

He stated the parliamentary group is comprised of the Mexican Workers Party, PMT; the Unified Socialist Party of Mexico, PSUM; and the Patriotic Revolutionary Party, [Partido Patriotico Revolucionario — PPR]; as well as the Popular Revolutionary Movement, MPR; the Communist Left Unity, UIC; and a faction of the Socialist Workers Party, PST.

The coordinator of the parliamentary group stated that the group will promote initiatives to better the conditions of the masses, and to defend the national interests, and the democratic development of political life.

PSD Nominates Presidential Candidate
PA011450 Mexico City UNOMASUNO in Spanish
24 Aug 87 p 4

[Text] The Social Democratic Party (PSD) yesterday began a political campaign to win the Presidency and oust from the National Palace the "corrupt group that has usurped the people's representation for the past 50 years for the benefit of small influential groups, with no concern for social impoverishment and giving away our natural resources abroad, which has further consigned our national sovereignty."

Luis Sanchez Aguilar made the above statement yesterday, when the majority of the delegates attending the PSD second national convention nominateed him as the party's presidential candidate.

Sanchez Aguilar promised to struggle politically to carry out the basic electoral platform that was also approved at the meeting. He said he has accepted the nomination to work for the following objectives, among others:

Promoting a new political constitution and creating a constitutional court that will guarantee full respect for individual rights, annul the national debt, and withdraw the country from GATT.

Working for the cancellation of the unconstitutional political counterreforms established by the current federal government, which were approved on 12 February; and achieving a truly proportional representation in the Congress and in the federal executive branch.

In addition to those points, Sanchez Aguilar committed himself to work for the modernization of agriculture, the elimination of landlordship, and environmental protection.

In his speech, Sanchez Aguilar questioned the "uncovering of six alleged precandidates whom the PRI claims were chosen by party members. This is a coarse falsification of the method proposed by the PSD since 1982 to elect its own presidential candidate. The president handpicks the PRI candidate. It is a big masquerade: Five naive unconcealed candidates and only one who is the real concealed candidate; 100 mute delegates having no right to question or voice their opinion; in sum, a distortion of what should take place in a real democracy."

During the convention, PSD President Ana Irene Arellano Romero said that despite legal obstacles and distorted justice to deny the party its legal status, Social Democrats have continued to advance.

"We are the first party that elects its presidential precandidate through an internal democratic electoral process since 1982. We were criticized then, and today others are imitating us. The farce of the six is a poor imitation of the process implemented by the Social Democrats. This is a historical fact that cannot be denied, and that confirms the viability of our political ideas."

Both Sanchez Aguilar and Arellano Romero believe that the new phase initiated by the PSD will be a great civic lesson for all Mexicans, because PSD militants are convinced that their struggle will germinate in the free minds of citizens, "who like us, surely hope to have a truly democratic regime, under which no one will be subjugated by a small powerful group.

Costa Rica

Minister on Incident With Nicaragua

PA030029 San Jose Radio Reloj in Spanish 2300 GMT 2 Sep 87

[Norma Umana report from the Public Security Ministry Building — live]

[Text] [Umana] Public Security Minister Hernan Garron Salazar is currently holding a news conference on the armed clash that took place this morning in Laguna de Aguadulce between Sandinist patrol boats and a Costa Rican patrol boat. Here is the minister:

[Garron Salazar — in progress] . . . Nicaraguan and opened fire on our Border Post 6. Our Post 6 returned fire. We do not have heavy weapons there but a medium-caliber machinegun. We responded to the attack.

Until then everything had gone well. They [words indistinct]. Our patrol boat that [words indistinct] was in front of Limon was ordered to go north. I made the decision to call the Nicaraguan Embassy and warned it that our patrol boat was heading north, and if the speedboats would not withdraw we would have a confrontration. The [Costa Rican] speedboat went up the river. Then the [Nicaraguan] speedboats withdrew, but our speedboat disappeared. After I spoke to Mr Carlos Sequeira of the Nicaraguan Embassy, he called me back. He argued that the Costa Rican speedboat was seized in Nicaraguan waters. In view of Costa Rica's position, however, Nicaragua has released the boat, and it is already sailing back to Costa Rica.

They have given the coordinates: 10 degrees, 55 minutes latitude north and 83 degrees, 30 minutes longitude west. This is inside Costa Rica. I believe they were mistakenly informed that this is Nicaraguan territory, but this is Costa Rican territory. These coordinates were provided by them, not by us. [passage indistinct]

I want to point out here the brave and honest way the captain of our small patrol boat, Captain Salazar Punes, boarded the other boats and told their crews they were mistaken. However, they seized our speed boat and headed for Nicaragua.

Fortunately, this has been resolved, and the boat has been released. We are expecting it to arrive at Barra Colorado today. Commissioner Barranco will be going there tomorrow with attorneys from our legal department to secure statements and testimony on this to file a protest to the Nicaraguan Embassy.

This is all I have. I only want to add that we are very satisfied with the attitude of the boys at Post 6 and with that of the patrol boat crew.

Nicaragua Returns 'Seized' Patrol Boat

PA031340 San Jose Radio Reloj in Spanish 1222 GMT 2 Sep 87

[Text] Nicaragua has returned the Costa Rican patrol boat. It has just been confirmed to this station that the Costa Rican patrol boat that the Sandinist Navy's patrol boats seized yesterday in Costa Rican waters, north of Barra del Colorado, has been returned. It is now at Delta Six.

This incident took place yesterday at 1545. The ensuing diplomatic negotiations from San Jose did not have immediate results. As we have already reported, the Sandinists had entered Costa Rican waters, and they were warned. However, the Sandinists' patrols were superior in terms of numbers, weaponry, and crewmembers, and seized our country's patrol boat. The boat was returned last night.

Top public security officials will go this morning to Delta Six to gather the appropriate information.

El Salvador

Bishop Rosa Chavez on Dialogue, Violence

PA010258 San Salvador La Voz Panamericana in Spanish 1300 GMT 30 Aug 87

[Sunday homily by San Salvador Auxiliary Bishop Msgr Gregorio Rosa Chavez at the Metropolitan Cathedral in San Salvador — live]

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] Let us now examine some of this week's events. Only a few days away from the month of our independence and the 1st anniversary of the October earthquake, we face a tense week because of issues related to the Guatemala document and the dialogue proposed by President Duarte for 15 September.

Meanwhile, the levels of violence continue to be a great concern. In addition, despicable actions against the humanitarian work of various religious institutions have taken place.

The government continues to support the Esquipulas II plan, which has been questioned and has inspired great pessimism because of the little or nonexistent trust some sectors have in the Nicaraguan regime's intentions.

It is a good thing that the Salvadoran political parties finally released the much-awaited list of their three representatives to the National Reconciliation Commission.

The Salvadoran guerrilla movement continues to insist on a dialogue without preconditions and proposed a 1-week military truce to facilitate it. In addition, the guerrilla fronts have sent a message to Archbishop Rivera y Damas urging him to support their efforts. The message, whose text already has been released abroad, reached Msgr Rivera y Damas Friday night.

President Duarte commented on that message, reiterating that dialogue can only take place on 15 September within the framework of his outline at the Legislative Assembly. According to President Duarte, a dialogue under different conditions could take place, but not on 15 September.

Regarding political violence, a report issued by the Legal Assistance Office says 25 people have been killed [this week]. In a strange incident about which many versions

have been offered, 5 Marional Jail prisoners were injured early Friday morning. Vladimir Centeno was the most seriously injured prisoner. His father came to the archbishopric to request the church intervene for his son to receive medical treatment outside the jail. The authorities agreed to the request.

Two events that involve humanitarian work must be highlighted. The first is the dynamite attack on the Lutheran Church's Faith and Hope Home in Nejapa Jurisdiction. The second is linked to the charges made by Coprefa against the nuns who offer spiritual support to the San Jose Las Flores residents. It is important to point out that those sisters do not work there secretly. They have the archbishopric's authorization, and the Army High Command is aware of their work there.

Next week, we will begin the month of our independence. October will be the 1st anniversary of last year's terrible earthquake, whose physical and deep psychological marks remain.

Cutbacks will be made soon, and people will continue to wonder what happened to the housing projects. The archbishopric gave temporary shelter to 300 communities in approximately 50 parishes, thus helping a total of 11,000 families. The most interesting aspect of all this, however, is the personal improvement encouraged in the individuals, which is the basis of the success of the housing project, which we are determined to achieve. [passage omitted]

UNTS Denounces Attack on Prison Inmates
PA291830 San Salvador Radio Cadena YSU in Spanish 1700 GMT 28 Aug 87

[National Union of Salvadoran Workers (UNTS) Executive Committee communique read by UNTS Executive Committee "leader" Humberto Centeno; date not given — recorded]

[Text] The UNTS informs the international community of the attack perpetrated today at 0100 by members of the guards and security forces against Mariona penitentiary inmates.

We strongly condemn the machinegunning of political prisoners and common criminals which left five prisoners seriously wounded. The wounded political prisoners of this latest violation of human rights — perpetrated on orders from the Armed Forces High Command — are: Jose Vladimir Centeno Lopez, son of ANTEL [National Administration for Telecommunications] and UNTS leader Humberto Centeno; Jose Antonio Ceron; and Fermin Raudas. They urgently need the diplomatic corps' help in getting transferred to a hospital that will guarantee their safety. The wounded common criminals are: Jose Antonio Cartagena and Hector Antonio Anzora.

This abominable action falls within the general framework of activities of the Armed Forces High Command and the repression of the Jose Napoleon Duarte regime against the population's sectors who reject the fascist measures used against the Salvadoran workers and people.

We demand that Jose Napoleon Duarte guarantee the lives of the wounded prisoners, order a prompt investigation, and punish the perpetrators. We ask the representatives of the international community and the governments of Central America and the world to report the machinegunning that took place this mornsing at dawn and to stop Duarte from talking about peace while defenseless fellow citizens dare captured, murdered, and machinegunned in El Salvador.

Finally, UNTS asks the international community to demonstrate its solidarity by reporting this incident and demanding that President Duarte fully respect human rights. [Signed] UNTS Executive Committee

FMLN-FDR Leader Zamora on Government Talks
PA021745 San Salvador Canal Seis Television in Spanish 0100 GMT 1 Sep 87

[Report by Roxana Lemus — passages within quotation marks recorded]

[Text] Yesterday, the deadline expired for the guerrillas to give the government their decision on the proposed 15 September meeting, and on whether they would accept President Duarte's conditions. The reply apparently was not in terms favorable to the government; however, the FMLN-FDR has repeated its willingness to encourage peace, according to statements made in Managua by leftist leader Ruben Zamora.

This weekend, the FMLN-FDR reiterated its willingness to hold talks and to agree on a cease-fire and democratization, with the assumption that the government will also take definite steps in that direction, leftist leader Ruben Zamora explained.

Commenting on points of the Central American presidents' peace plan, Zamora said that this plan does not ignore the two fronts, and that faced with the 90-day deadline, more national political action is needed.

[Zamora] "If the FMLN-FDR takes the wrong steps, they can become politically isolated. The FMLN-FDR now has opportunities to make progress. How we use these opportunities will depend on us. It is not a matter of destabilizing the Guatemala plan; this would be very naive and would not work. The fact remains that all other political forces, including the FDR and the country's political parties, depend on us for political actions to attain peace in El Salvador. If we manage to move ahead, we will not be left out. If we are left out, the possibility for peace in our country will take a step backward."

Zamora said that in Central America there is a powerful drive to attain peace, but there are also militant forces encouraged by foreign powers.

[Zamora] "Central American people want peace and a level of independence that, as a sovereign people, they deserve. There is also a militant force in Central America, primarily represented by President Reagan's policy.

Frankly, there is a confrontation of forces in Central America. The Guatemala agreement is the expression of an important moment in which the force and desire for peace prevailed over the pressure to maintain belligerent forces in the area. That is why the Guatemala resolution is important. This is why all forces in Central America must take a positive attitude toward this resolution and try to realize its objectives."

The FDR leader, who presently lives in Managua, said that he would not like to judge the intentions of President Duarte.

[Zamora] "It is rather difficult for me to judge Napoleon Duarte's intentions, which are between him, his conscience, and God. It is true that, according to St Theresa: The road to Hell is paved with good intentions. I believe El Salvador needs neither good nor bad intentions, but deeds. We believe that Napoleon Duarte's intentions regarding the talks should be tested. As far as I am concerned, he will not be able to pass the test."

When President Duarte's deadline expired yesterday for the rebels to respond to his request for 15 September talks, Zamora said that the president had not taken further positive steps toward the meeting.

Guatemala

Cerezo Seeks Nicaraguan Leaders' Release

PA292141 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 0013 GMT 29 Aug 87

[Text] Guatemala, 28 Aug (ACAN-EFE) — Guatemalan President Vinicio Cerezo announced today that he will negotiate the release of two Nicaraguan leaders with the Nicaraguan Government.

After receiving the credentials of Erick Peter Landi Lus, the new Swedish ambassador to Guatemala, at a ceremony at the Government Palace, the Christian Democratic president said: "I will intercede for the political prisoners in Managua." He added that in accordance with the policy of "active neutrality" followed by his government regarding the Central American conflict, "I can mediate in a problem that does not only affect a country in the region but the entire world."

Cerezo said he will delegate the negotiations with President Daniel Ortega's government for the release of labor leaders Lino Hernandez and Alberto Samorio to Vice President Roberto Carpio Nicolle.

Carpio Nicolle held a special meeting with a delegation from the group of 15 Nicaraguan exiles who on Thursday began a hunger strike in front of the Government Palace to demand the release of the Nicaraguan opposition leaders. Hernandez is president of the Nicaraguan Human Rights Committee, and Samorio is president of the Nicaraguan Bar Association.

Carpio Nicolle said "the negotiations with President Ortega's government will be within the framework of the Esquipulas II peace agreement," which was signed here on 7 August by the Central American presidents.

The Nicaraguan exiles have gathered at the large square in front of the Government Palace and are continuing their hunger strike.

Defense Minister Confirms Army Major Killed

PA311555 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1512 GMT 29 Aug 87

[Text] Guatemala City, 29 Aug (ACAN-EFE) — An officer of the Guatemalan Army was killed and four soldiers wounded during a guerrilla ambush against a military patrol in San Marcos Department, 334 km southwest of the capital.

Defense Minister General Hector Alejandro Gramajo today confirmed that "we regret the death of Army Major Edgar Rolando Orozco Ochoa," in an area known as Las Marimbas, Malacatan municipality, where he was deployed with a patrol.

According to an official report, a group of insurgents — presumably of the Revolutionary Organization of the People in Arms (ORPA), which operates in southern Guatemala — "were harassing the civilian population" last Thursday.

The military patrol headed by Maj Orozco Ochoa was deployed to defend the civilians, and was ambushed by the rebels, who killed the officer and wounded four soldiers, according to a report released by the armed institution's press office.

The military report, which states that the area is being "combed" in search of insurgents, does not report whether there were any casualties to the subversive ranks.

Government troop casualties were evacuated from the battlefield and taken by helicopters to the military hospital in this capital.

Egyptian-Guatemalan Communique Issued 27 Aug

NC271554 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1500 GMT 27 Aug 87

[Text] An Egyptian-Guatemalan communique was issued in Guatemala today in which that Central American country expresses support for Egyptian diplomatic efforts to convoke an international peace conference to resolve the Middle East issue. The communique also emphasizes Egypt's support for the peace accord signed by the five Central American presidents in Guatemala on 7 August.

The communique was issued at the end of the visit to Guatemala City by Dr Butrus Ghali, minister of state for foreign affairs. During the visit, Dr Ghali and the Guatemalan minister of culture signed an executive protocol for cultural, scientific, and technical cooperation between the two countries for the next 3 years. The protocol includes scholarship exchanges and cooperation in the fields of youth, sports, media, cinema, environment, and other areas.

Panama

Delvalle Gives Legislative Assembly Speech

PA021320 Panama City Domestic Service in Spanish 1900 GMT 1 Sep 87

[Speech by President Eric Arturo Delvalle at the opening of the Legislative Assembly at Justo Arosemena Legislative Palace in Panama City — live]

[Text] Honorable Legislator Alberto Aleman Boyd, president of the Legislative Assembly; Honorable Mrs Marisol Reyes de Vasquez, president of the Supreme Court of Justice; Your Excellencies Ministers of State; Your Excellency Mr Francisco Rodriguez, comptroller general of the Republic; honorable legislators; Honorable Mrs Yolanda Pulice de Rodriguez, president of the Electoral Tribunal; honorable magistrates of the Supreme Court of Justice and the Electoral Tribunal; Honorable Mr Carlos Villalaz, attorney general of the Republic; Honorable Mr Olmedo Sanjur, attorney general of the administration; Your Excellencies Vice Ministers of State; Your Excellency Msgr Jose Sebastian Lavoa, apostolic nuncio of his holiness and dean of the diplomatic corps; Your Excellencies extraordinary and plenipotentiary Ambassadors accredited to our government; honorable representatives of international organizations accredited in Panama; distinguished members of the Panama Defense Forces General Staff; Honorable Representative Omar Quintero, president of the Assembly of Corregimiento Representatives; Honorable Mr Alberto Velasquez, governor of Panama Province; Honorable Mrs Jilma Noriega de Jurado, mayor of Panama City; Honorable Mrs Balbina de Perinan, mayor of the San Miguelito district; distinguished directors of government organizations; distinguished members of the Latin American Indian Parliament; special guests; representatives of the national and international communications media; ladies and gentlemen; fellow citizens:

It gives me great pleasure to address you on the most outstanding actions my administration has carried out since 1 March, as decreed by our national Constitution. I also wish to express my warmest recognition of the task carried out by the legislative branch and of the zeal you have shown in working for Panama's development, in harmonious cooperation with the executive branch, as demonstrated by the discussion and approval of a significant number of bills.

I take this opportunity to cite a few of the 15 bills I have approved during the latest session, all of which have great economic and social significance because they aim to benefit large sectors of our country. These include eliminating the enrollment fee in the country's public schools, providing additional benefits for certain retired Panamanian citizens, regulating propane gas caps to fit all gas tanks, providing and controling medications at the state health centers, regulating telecommunications, and exploiting hydrocarbons.

This great task has been carried out with admirable civic awareness and a deep sense of responsibility aimed toward solving several problems the country faces, which are identical to those confronted by other developing countries.

Thanks to the positive and coordinated actions of the executive and legislative branches, we have been able to ward off serious dangers and diminish the risks of a social confrontation of such serious consequences as those that are now being endured by several sister countries of the region. However, the country has been experiencing for several weeks a political crisis born of the unrestrained ambitions of unpatriotic individuals who are attempting to seize power by toppling the established order through an assault. Their seditious attempts are based on the absurd and contradictory public statements that a retired colonel made last June against his former superiors and the organization in which he served for many years. These statements found an immediate haven in certain communications media opposed to the government. As the days passed , the leaders of that destabilization movement joined well-known political figures and opposition parties to strengthen the seditious actions, promote violence, and allow chaos to reign. All types of excesses have been staged in the streets as indispensable steps in their plans to dispose the legitimate authorities.

Those leaders have violated the law by their actions, laws that exist to guarantee the peaceful coexistence of all members of society; and they have repeatedly incited public subversion. However, no matter how just their actions seem to all those citizens, they have seriously affected the country's economy and have endangered the lives and security of hundreds of citizens. Deplorably, these thoughtless actions have forced the authorities to bring order back to the city's streets, and this has brought about unavoidable clashes that fortunately have had no serious consequences. The vandalism reached such a point that the executive branch was forced on 10 June 1987 to suspend individual rights, but these were later reinstated.

From the very first days of these incidents, my government has reiterated its willingness to participate in a national consultation that would lead to a frank and constructive understanding among all Panamanians, an indispensable condition to overcome the critical situation affecting the country.

The country's economy — until the beginning of the crisis — showed promising signs as a result of the combined efforts of workers and management, and the decisive support offered by my administration. The indicators showed the economy had grown at a rate of more than 3.5 percent during this year's 1st semester. The various sectors such as agriculture, industry, construction, transisthmian transportation through the canal and through the pipeline, and the reexport trade showed a growth rate over and above that estimated at the beginning of the year. The use of electricity followed the same general trend toward growth and reached 8 percent during this year's 1st semester as compared with the same period last year. The increase in tax collections surpassed the estimated income, and this showed clearly how the economy was improving.

However, the atmosphere of economic recuperation that was evident until the first half of June 1987 has seriously deteriorated as a result of the frequent political upheavals I have been citing. These upheavals caused managers to stop investing and to lower their inventories, and consumers to reduce their personal expenses — resulting in a natural contraction of the economy. Those reactions were caused and stimulated by an infamous campaign of alarming lies directed against our own international banking and financial center, the stability of which we should all guard zealously.

Those immature individuals, lacking nationalist feelings, in collusion with traditional enemies of Panama in the United States, resort to the vilest acts to reach their ignoble goals. It is deplorable that this campaign led the U.S. Senate to make statements that constitute a clear intervention in Panama's domestic affairs and a dastardly attack on our sovereignty — statements that were sternly rejected by our government, our people, and the international community.

A clear sign of that rejection was written in a OAS resolution. I take advantage of this lofty podium to state emphatically that my government respects, protects, and supports the financial and banking international center operating in Panama; and that it will take all necessary measures to reinstate full confidence in its operations, so they will develop with the normalcy they have had until now. [applause]

There will be no paper money! There will be no freezing of deposits! [applause] There will be no restrictions that will change the freedom of our banking system! [applause]

I reiterate my administration's policy to support by all lawful means available the economic and social development of our country, where free enterprise has a basic role to play in the general efforts we all must make to ensure that the masses obtain the benefits that are legitimately theirs, because they are an indispensable part of the generation of riches in the country. I share with profound concern and sincere interest the fate, the needs, and the search for real and permanent solutions for the most needy classes.

In this difficult situation the country is going through, my government will not cease to look for the adequate answers to the most dire needs of that important and legitimate part of the national conglomerate: the popular sector.

In this development, the agricultural and cattle sector shows encouraging prospects. My government will increase the programs of technical assistance to small and medium producers, providing land titles, irrigation and drainage, dissemination of technical information, and training and strengthening of the cooperative sector. We will also continue to support the export of nontraditional products and cattle exports. In the sector of commerce and industries, a high priority is to support the program of development of the small and medium businesses, and we will spare no effort to promote this development throughout the country. We will greatly promote the development of the fishing industry and increase the export of our maritime resources. Under the law regulating the exploration and exploitation of hydrocarbons promulgated by this assembly, we will give special attention to attracting the interest of enterprises technically and financially qualified to initiate explorations in our territory, and this will generate new employment opportunities. I can now announce that the first international company that will take advantage of this new law will in the next few days sign a contract to begin explorations as soon as you ratify the contract.

An assessment of the entire country's mining facilities will be completed in order to encourage mining enterprises to begin explorations in our territory and promote mining by individuals.

I will give priority to start the work on the strengthening of our port facilities under the concept of a port complex. As a complement of the port complex, we will begin rehabilitation of the transisthmian railroad, a facility that is indispensable for that development.

Despite fiscal limitations, my administration will continue to support the projects concerning the infrastructure of transportation, energy and telecommunications; the improvement of roads in the capital, new overpasses, the northern corridor, and the widening of the Panama-Arraijan Road; the construction of the Fortuna high dam; the expansion of telephone lines and the development of rural telephone systems. New land and air transport terminals will be constructed in the central part of the country. Moreover, the progress made in eliminating smuggling and customs fraud is notable, as are the improvements achieved in the modernization of services to taxpayers. By the same token, it is good to point out that the sale of state properties such as Aeroperlas and Contadora Panama were of great benefit because they were only causing losses to the Treasury. The social sector will have the special attention of my administration. Therefore, in education, health, and sanitation, we will emphasize actions to improve the quality of services and the reinforcement and modernization of the institutions, especially the sewage and potable water systems throughout the country. My government will construct the San Miguelito hospital, a social necessity for that important district of the Republic.

Personally, I suffer with the thousands of Panamanians who still do not have a house. In this International Year of the Homeless, the government will try hard to give additional and effective impetus to housing programs, loans for materials, and repair of condemned houses.

It is timely to point out that the budget, which is the main tool for the application of our policy of social and economic development, has been managed and will continue to be managed with the discretion and austerity demanded by the current economic situation. I can

assure this honorable assembly that despite budget and fiscal limitations, the funds of the state are being used with great honesty and awareness of national priorities. My government will give special attention to public administration and its servants, who have such serious responsibilities to the entire nation.

I feel it is timely to repeat that an unchanged principle of my government's foreign policy has been to strengthen and defend the principle of national sovereignty, to preserve the right of self-determination, to respect at all times the right of the territorial integrity of states and the principle of nonintervention in domestic affairs of other states, and to contribute positively to the safeguarding and strengthening of peace. Panama has fulfilled and will continue to fulfill its commitments to the international community, and will respect the solemn agreement that it has entered into with other nations.

As we draw near to the 10th anniversary of the signing of the Torrijos-Carter treaties, I want to emphasize the great significance of that historical event to all Panamanians, because it fulfilled deep national aspirations and was reached after a struggle that lasted for generations. Panama will be eternally grateful to all the martyrs of the fatherland, and to all the illustrious men who took part in the great effort to eliminate the fifth border — as General Omar Torrijos Herrera termed it — and to achieve for our nation total sovereignty over our entire territory. For these reasons, I reiterate today my government's firm determination to closely watch over the faithful compliance with those transcendental agreements, to ensure that the achievements made by Panama in a struggle that started in the first days of our Republic will not be lost.

The struggle that has been going on for generations is not yet over. On the contrary, we are obliged to continue it until Law 96-70 is either eliminated or amended, because its clauses void or modify [applause] several stipulations of the Torrijos-Carter treaties to the detriment of our Republic's interests.

In another aspect of our foreign policy, I am happy to say that Panama shares the just aspirations of all nations of the American continent for peaceful coexistence and respect toward the various characteristics that are part of the spiritual and human riches of the New World. For this reason, my government has spared no effort to contribute to the understanding among those countries. Within the framework of the Contadora and Support Groups, it was able to exert influence for the Esquipulas II meeting to take place. This was a decisive meeting of the Central American rulers in their search for regional peace.

Honorable Legislators: The particular circumstances the country is going through make it necessary for me to again refer to the acute public demonstrations and the destabilization campaign being promoted by sectors opposed to the government. Without noting their malevolent objectives, it is fair to admit that some of the criticism against us deserves careful consideration by the government so institutions, procedures, and regulations can be revised, because it might be possible that they do not conform to the highest interests and aspirations of the country. All Panamanians, all foreigners coexisting with us, especially those who reside in Panama City, are surely aware and concerned about the serious disorders that have taken place in the last few months and that continue to take place.

No matter what the causes are, no matter what the reasons given for them are, no matter what sector they originate in, no matter which groups promote and carry them out, the truth is that unless an end is put to the constant alteration of public order, the destruction of private property, the disobedience of authority, the violation of the rights of others, the lack of personal respect, the slander and calumny, the Panamanian community will suffer for a period of time that is impossible to foresee, the destruction of the enviable atmosphere of peace and prosperity that — despite social, political, or economic differences of the past — had been enjoyed here until 3 months ago.

It is necessary for passions and intransigency to give way to common sense. It is necessary for reality to prevail over illusions. For the sake of this nation's present and future, it is necessary to weigh the almost impossible and uncertain achievement of absolute rectifications against the danger and high cost of struggling for those rectifications at any price.

I am saying this convinced that careful thinking is necessary in the face of this crisis. As an honest man, I admit that mistakes have been made, but I must also note that those opposed to us have committed grave and criminal actions that go against the integrity of the government and the nation.

I admit that our political system requires adequate and important rectifications that should enjoy public trust, but these rectifications cannot be enforced by destroying the system or be imposed by an emotional mob. It must be induced by a serious and thinking sector of the population whose arguments, voice, and methods will find a positive echo in the Republic.

In my address to the nation on 5 July, almost 1 month after the unfortunate events that have upset our fatherland began, I said it is most urgent to return peace and calm to Panama. Today, almost 2 months later, I am more certain the situation is the same and it is increasingly necessary to secure peace and calm. I also said that to achieve this, all groups must make huge sacrifices; all sectors have to try hard; all sectors have to assume huge responsibilities. The branches of the state, the political parties, the Defense Forces, and the people must be prepared to contribute positively and effectively to secure national concord and a normal situation throughout the Republic.

On 12 August, on occasion of the anniversary of the Year 2000 Battalion, I said the moment had come when all Panamanians have to set passions, resentment, and

doubts aside; and to seek a solution that should primarily satisfy the best interests of the Republic.

I also spoke about the solemn commitment of the Panama Defense Forces to follow the road of democracy, and I urged its commander in chief, General Manuel Antonio Noriega, to fulfill together with me this sacred commitment with history.

Today — in this honorable building that evokes memories of forefather Justo Arosemena and that houses this legislative group; and in front of the most important authorities of the judicial and executive branches, distinguished heads of missions of the countries accredited to my government, church representatives, and the Panamanian people — I reiterate my firm decision to march on the road of an authentic, effective democracy based on the fundamental principles of justice and liberty; to exercise, as chief of state, the powers the Constitution and the laws of the Republic give me; and to do so with full liberty and independence, with no more pressure than that which is politically consistent, normal, and well balanced.

I am sure the reopening of the media under investigation would contribute to these objectives, but this reopening cannot mean a return to an abuse of freedom of expression and to libertinism. In this regard, we have admitted that freedom of the press is a fundamental human right and keystone of all liberties, as Resolution 5 of the UN General Assembly — which was adopted in 1946 — states. However, the state has the obligation to protect justly and decidedly the rights of the people and the community in a way that the rights of some do not violate the rights of others. In this situation, the state has the legal authority to rationally regulate public rights and liberties.

The declaration of principles of the code of ethics of Panamanian journalists, approved in 1979, states: Biased and twisted information can alter the historic course of a nation.

Finally, as the Constitution states in Article 37, there are legal responsibilities when a media source is used to act against the reputation and honor of people or against social security and order. Man can be free only in the framework of a constitutional framework comprised of firm political institutions that would guarantee his freedom. When there is disorder, all liberties vanish.

Within the framework of a democratic effort and with the strong desire for the country to return to tranquillity, it would be good if the pertinent authorities establish bail for the labor leaders so they can enjoy their freedom while the corresponding judicial proceedings are completed. Regarding those arrested at the retired FDP colonel's residence, they have all been released with the exception of those who, according to the authorities, have criminal records which do not permit or justify this release.

Honorable legislators: As members of the legislative branch, you are tasked with legislating — an important and complex task — with the aim of improving and strengthenig the nation and Panamanian society. As president of the Republic and the top official of the executive branch, I have the duty and serious responsibility to lead the country — based on the Constitution and the law — through the best paths of peace, freedom, and social welfare.

The top representatives of the judicial branch and the Attorney General's Office have the difficult and delicate mission to administer justice with integrity, ability, and honesty; because justice is an essential aspect in the coexistence of men. I tell the FDP chiefs, officers, noncommissioned officers, and troops that history will save an important place for them in the conquest of our glory.

It is a glory that will be Panamanian. It is a glory that you have helped forge and you will continue to help forge, so that at dawn, in the year 2000, Panama will be sovereign over all its territory. However, it is also your responsibility to make sure this future glory will not be short-lived or the path to it may become filled with pain and tragedy, because it was not understood on time that perfecting our democracy is an irreplaceable element in this march to victory. This democracy is needed so the Defense Forces can fulfill their professional responsibilities within a framework of recognition, dignity, and respect.

I remind all the inhabitants of this country, all the Panamanian men and women, and all my friends and adversaries, regardless of their race, creed, or social standing, that their behavior as members of a civilized society, with rights to express yourselves, dissent, and protest also involves respecting the rights of others so your own rights can be respected. Your future and that of the Panamanian homeland depends on your calm or impassioned attitudes at this moment of national crisis.

Deeply moved by all these problems and with the determination to place the country back under an environment of brotherhood and well-being — which was characteristic of the country — I intend to make the adjustments and rectifications that are necessary to fulfill the duty I have imposed on myself: to lead the country to full democracy, with liberty and with order and respect for the country's institutions. To do that, I demand the support of all Panamanians of goodwill. I promise, as head of the government, to work harder to heal the deep wounds that are bleeding our fatherland.

To a person who has the grave responsibility of leading a nation, no dimension is greater than the dimension of the fatherland, and no emotion can be more intense than the love for the fatherland. My presence here at this difficult time for Panamanians and the Republic moves me to say that I will make sacrifices that may be beyond my strength but not beyond my feelings. I have come here to maintain that I will continue my efforts to reconcile the country and restore its progress and the traditions that my ancestors left me. As Panamanians,

my ancestors began to build this homeland at the beginning of the century. The understanding and affection of my wife, my children, and all my relatives; the loyalty of my personal and political friends; and my faith in God sustain me.

As long as I am alive, I will not stop until I have spread understanding so the country can move closer to the doors of truth. Panama has a mission to fulfill and all Panamanians will fulfill this mission.

Thank you. [applause]

Argentina

Soviet Envoy Denies Gorbachev Latin Tour

PY030247 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0135 GMT 3 Sep 87

[Text] Buenos Aires, 2 Sep (EFE) — Soviet Ambassador Oleg Kvasov denied that Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev is planning to visit Argentina this year.

Kvasov described a recent report datelined Moscow that Gorbachev is planning to visit Argentina and other South American countries late this year as "a fabrication."

The head of the Soviet mission told the press he is unaware of Gorbachev's intention to visit the region. Kvasov noted, however, that the Soviet leader "has great interest in visiting South America." Kvasov confirmed that Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze will visit Argentina on 29 September. Shevardnadze will also visit Brazil and Uruguay after attending the UN General Assembly.

In Buenos Aires, Shevardnadze will meet with his Argentine counterpart, Dante Caputo, and will sign a joint declaration, currently being studied by Soviet and Argentine diplomats.

British MP Announces Meeting on Falklands

PY022151 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 1945 GMT 2 Sep 87

[Text] Buenos Aires, 2 Sep (NA) — George Foulkes, the British Labor Party spokesman in the House of Commons, announced today that "the final details are being arranged" for a meeting between Argentine and British leaders in London next year to analyze the Malvinas issue.

Foulkes explained that the initiative will be supported by the South Atlantic Council, an organization made up of lawmakers of the two countries, "and may be welcomed by the United States, which is concerned that the problem has not yet been solved." Foulkes made this announcement after a closed-door meeting with Senate Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Adolfo Gass this morning. In the afternoon, Foulkes met with Radical Deputy Federico Storani.

Asked about the attitude of British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher toward the Malvinas issue, Foulkes said: "So far there have been no indications of a change. But the war ended 5 years ago, and, thereafter, several elections have been held in both Argentina and Great Britain." "This means," he added, "that the power of democracy will make it very difficult for her to continue with her intransigence, and I see a possibility for progress on the subject."

In this regard, Foulkes said "the rapprochement between the two nations must be handled with great enthusiasm and consideration," [words indistinct] great chance to see friends like Foreign Ministry Under Secretary Jorge Sabato, Senator Gass and his Justicialist peers Jose Bordon and Julio Amoedo." He added he will travel to Chile tomorrow and this afternoon he will meet with Federico Storani, chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Chamber of Deputies.

[Words indistinct] that "despite the fact that Margaret Thatcher will unfortunately stay in power for 5 more years, his party is revising its entire political strategy and the possibility that this subject may be included in the agenda has not been ruled out." Foulkes added that during his meeting yesterday with Foreign Affairs Under Secretary Jorge Sabato, "a series of agreements and proposals were formulated. I will submit them to the British Government to resume consideration of the subject." As for the chat he and Gass had this morning, Foulkes said that, among other things, they analyzed, "the exclusion zone and the British investments in Argentina."

Concerning the fact that the maiden surname of President Alfonsin's mother is also Foulkes, the British lawmaker said: "I do not know whether there are any family bonds. I do not think there are any, but many people have told me to grow a moustache to look like him."

Foulkes added that the meeting in London next year will be attended not only by lawmakers and politicians of both countries but that "church representatives, culture figures, and businessmen will also be invited." "Let us hope this initiative will be welcomed by everyone, even by the United States, which is concerned this problem is still unsolved," he concluded.

Caputo on Central America, Foreign Policy

PY021730 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 1155 GMT 2 Sep 87

[Text] Buenos Aires, 2 Sep (NA) — Foreign Minister Dante Caputo said if a cease-fire is ever reached in Central America it should be supervised by the United Nations or another international organization, thus ruling out the possibility of a Latin American peacekeeping force. He said "there will be no changes" in Argentine foreign policy following the elections scheduled for next Sunday.

The foreign minister implicitly ruled out the possibility that a reduction [quita] in the foreign debt capital would be sought during the summit of Latin American presidents scheduled for late November. Caputo said the Cartagena Consensus is the appropriate forum to discuss this issue.

In comments to the magazine SOMOS, Caputo said the proposals being prepared by the Foreign Ministry for the technical meeting of the Group of 8, the Latin American nations, and the UN and OAS representatives in Nicaragua this month also propose that the peace commission, which was created last month in Caracas, verifies both the political agreements in Central America and national reconciliation. In comments to Radio del Plata,

Caputo yesterday called for the "regaining of the great Argentine destiny, which made Argentina the 6th greatest world power in the 1930's," adding that "without pride, without that calling, we are finished."

Caputo denied that the Easter week military events were linked to a rejection for the signing of fishing agreements with the Soviet Union and Bulgaria, or with the implementation of an agreement on nuclear cooperation with the PRC. The foreign minister denied that the orientation of his ministry's foreign policy is "reddish." Caputo said "this is just part of the folklore of the under developed nations because one must be ideologically weak to harbor that kind of misgiving." In a tone of absolute confidence, Caputo said the UCR [Radical Civic Union] "would win the elections in Buenos Aires and in Buenos Aires province." He said "I do not have the slightest doubt about it."

Referring to the diplomatic agenda for the rest of the year, Caputo recalled that French President Francois Mitterrand will make a 3-day visit to Argentina on 6 October and that Spanish President Felipe Gonzalez and the Hungarian and Yugoslav presidents will visit Argentina following Mitterrand's visit. He added that on 27 and 28 November the presidents of eight Latin American countries will meet in Mexico to discuss the Central American issue.

Paraguay Must 'Make Gestures' To Join Process

PY022331 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 2030 GMT 2 Sep 87

[by Eugenio Paillet]

[Text] Buenos Aires, 2 Sep (NA) — After the tension between Buenos Aires and Asuncion peaked last week, the easing observed in the last few days has wiped out the threat of a break in relations. The reason for this is that over the last few months, the moderate sector of the General Stroessner administration has discretely shown an interest in joining the integration process set in motion by Argentina and Brazil.

There are concrete indications at high governemnt levels that the Paraguayan courts' refusal to grant the extradition of Army Major Bianco and Police Inspector Miara — who have been charged with registering four children, whose parents are said to be missing, as their own — has caused "much annoyance," and has strained relations, which are rather cool, to "an extreme."

Under these circumstances, and with some improprities on both sides — Paraguayan lawmakers have referred to some of their Argentine colleagues as "failed politicians" and "people who long for Mitreism" [after later Argentine President Bartolome Mitre] — which did not help to ease the tension, some government officials feared that the situation might become aggravated.

In the last few weeks, Interior Minister Antonio Troccoli frequently had to abandon his ministerial duties — now dealing almost completely with the electoral campaign's final dash — to try to reach an agreement with his Paraguayan counterpart, Sabino Montanaro. Sources close to Troccoli said he and Montanaro spoke over the phone on several occasions, and Montanaro promised some kind of solution to calm things down.

Much give-and-take on the issue has revealed that a sector of the Paraguayan Government is as much interested in concluding this episode as the Argentine Governemnt is, the main reason being the economic integration process Argentina and Brazil began over a year ago. Government House sources said "Paraguay does not want to remain outside this integration process, and it has let us know about it." The sources say the moderate sector of Stroessner's Colorado Party is not happy that "its old partner and protector, Brazil, which to some extent fulfilled this role until a couple of years ago, has now turned its eyes toward the River Plate basin.

Argentine sources said it is not only possible but also desirable that Paraguay join the integration process being implemented by Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay. These sources have, however, pointed out that the Asuncion government "must make some gestures" to be allowed to join.

Those who said the Paraguayan courts' decision has "annoyed" the Alfonsin administration admitted that in the last 3 and 1/2 years, Argentine authorities "have ignored" some annoying indications that have at least awakened the suspicion that Paraguay welcomes any unwanted person who flees Argentina.

Among such persons are car thiefs, highway pirates, drug traffickers, and ultra-rightists longing for past times — to mention only the most notable types — who seem to enjoy sort of a "protective unbrella" in Paraguay. Attempts on the part of the Argentine courts to force those people back to Argentina to clarify their situation has been in vain. High-ranking government sources have said: "We will make no hysterical decision," but they warned that "to prevent the situation from worsening even further, we expect some concrete gestures" on the part of the Asuncion government.

Paraguay

PLRA Issues Communique on Newspaper Closure

PY021354 Asuncion HOY in Spanish 31 Aug 87 p 7

[Excerpt] The Authentic Radical Liberal Party (PLRA) has issued a communique stating that "the closure of the weekly newspaper EL PUEBLO, the ban on the Civic Assembly and the ban on the weekly newspaper application by Humberto Rubin are the continuation and consolidation of the fascist-Stroessnerist militant line." The communique adds that "the repressive measures which we repudiate, highlight the Paraguayan political situation which is a clear confrontation between a minority militant-Stroessnerist group and all the anti-Stroessnerist and anti-fascist democratic forces."

According to the PLRA communique, those democratic forces are "reportedly made up of authentic liberals, members of the Colorado Party Convergence faction and

the Colorado Integration Movement, the Colorado Party Traditionalist Faction, Febrerista Revolutionary Party members, independent Christian Democrats, and honest active forces of Paraguay." [passage omitted]

Opponents Criticize Ban

PY021347 Asuncion HOY in Spanish 1 Sep 87 P 8

[Text] The Colorado Popular Movement for Convergence and Unity has issued a communique "rejecting the order issued by Stroessnerist usurpers to close the Febrerista Revolutionary Party weekly EL PUEBLO, and the ban against HOJA DE DOMINGO [Sunday Page], because these actions go against the democratic principles and tradition of the Colorado Party."

The movement states that the government ban "violates the freedom of press" and "is in line with the closure of the newspapers COMUNIDAD of the Catholic Church, LA REPUBLICA, ABC COLOR and Radio Nanduti, all of which show that the autocracy is unable to comply with the laws and principles of civilized coexistence. Our movement believes the time has come for the human rights organizations of the United Nations and the OAS to end their bureaucratic delays and condemn the violations of human rights in Paraguay, under which the people are suffering the painful effects of these violations and are in great need of international solidarity."

FRG's Duve on Press Freedom

PY021801 Asuncion HOY in Spanish 2 Sep 87 p 8

[Excerpt] Freimut Duve, a German Social Democratic congressman, is visiting Asuncion to hold meetings on politics and human rights in Paraguay. He said: "It is regrettable there is no freedom of the press in Paraguay and that very important newspapers and a radio station have been closed."

Duve made this comment after holding a lengthy meeting with Dr Luis Martinez Miltos, the president of the Chamber of Deputies. Duve also talked with other deputies, including Dr Martin Chiola, Dr Ubaldo Centurion Morinigo, Dr Roberto Velazquez Escobar, Dr Juan Manuel Morales, Dr Francisco Solano Benitez, and Dr Carlos Ferreira Ybarra of the Liberal Party bloc.

The German congressman said that in Paraguay "the people are not permitted to express themselves and to struggle freely to implement a democratic society." [passage omitted]

Ambassador Briefs Minister on Extradition Case

PY021410 Asuncion HOY in Spanish 1 Sep 87 p 9

[Excerpts] Miguel Angel Bestard, Paraguayan ambassador to Argentina, yesterday met with Foreign Minister Carlos A. Saldivar to brief him on the extradition case of Miara and Bianco, which has been requested by Argentine officials.

"This case is under the jurisdiction of the judicial branch," said Ambassador Miguel Angel Bestard yesterday regarding the extradition request of Miara and Bianco and the clarification of the paternity of four children. [passage omitted]

Regarding Paraguayan-Argentine relations, Bestard said "relations are good. The two countries have common interests." He explained that in cases like this the other issues remain at a different level.

After meeting with the foreign minister, Ambassador Bestard talked to the press reiterating that "we must respect the independence of powers as established by the national Constitution. Whatever decision is made by the judge the good relations between Paraguay and Argentina must prevail above all."